

# Assemblyman **PAUL KORETZ**

**Forty-second Assembly District**

*proudly representing the communities of West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, Century City, Westwood, Bel Air, Brentwood, West Los Angeles, Hollywood, Hancock Park, Universal City, Studio City, and Sherman Oaks*



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## **Assemblyman Koretz Recognizes World Aids Day Calls On Governor To Fully Fund Aids Drug Assistance Program**

**(Sacramento)** Assemblyman Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood) recognized December 1<sup>st</sup> as World AIDS Day by calling on Governor Schwarzenegger to fully fund the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) which provides medications to low income uninsured and under insured HIV patients.

“The Schwarzenegger administration’s first budget cutting proposal calls for capping the caseloads of vital health programs including the AIDS Drug Assistance Program. If this proposal is implemented, more than 700 people would be on a California waiting list for HIV medications by next June, doubling the total number of people on ADAP waiting lists nationwide,” said Assemblyman Koretz.

According to the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors, 16 states have ADAP waiting lists totaling 679 people as of November 1, 2003. ADAP patients use, on average, three HIV drugs that together retail for \$10,000 to \$15,000 per year.

“The cost of HIV medications in the United States is so high that without ADAP, virtually every HIV positive person without prescription drug coverage would be forced into bankruptcy. ADAP saves the state money by allowing HIV positive people to stay healthy so they can work, pay taxes and rent, and keep themselves out of more costly public assistance programs. Governor Schwarzenegger’s proposal is shortsighted and ill informed,” said Koretz.

Los Angeles County now has between 1,500 and 2,000 new HIV infections every year, and California has 7000 to 9000. Internationally, the picture is even bleaker with over 40 million people infected with HIV worldwide.

“HIV prevention and treatment challenges are growing as infection rates climb in the African American and Latino communities, and as crystal methamphetamine use and safe sex burnout erode previous successes in the Gay population. World AIDS Day is a time when we reflect on the impact of HIV/AIDS in our neighborhoods, cities, and in our world. Hopefully Governor Schwarzenegger is reflecting as well,” commented Koretz.

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